

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Amendments

The Applicant has amended claims 45, 53-54 and 56; claims 52 and 63 have been canceled. Applicant respectfully submits no new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 45-51, and 53-62 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant notes with appreciation the conditional allowance of claims 52 and 63. As the Examiner has suggested, claims 52 and 63 have been rewritten in independent form including all limitation of the base claims and any intervening claims. Therefore no amendments have been made to narrow the scope of the pending claims or to create any sort of estoppel.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 45-51 and 56-62 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Krasner (US Patent No. 6,133,874). In order to expedite allowance of this application, the Applicant has canceled claims 52 and 63 without prejudice and incorporated the allowable subject matter into independent claims 45 and 56. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims

Claims 45 and 56 and the respective dependent claims now contain allowable subject matter not disclosed in the Krasner reference. The Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claim 53 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krasner and further in view of Kurby (U.S. Patent No. 5,999,125). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of this claim.

Allowable subject matter similar to that in claims 52 and 63 has been incorporated into independent claim 53 and the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of this claim.

Claims 54 and 55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krasner in further view of Hermansson et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,987,319). The Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

Allowable subject matter has been incorporated into independent claim 54 and the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 54 and depending claim 55.

Prior Art Not Relied Upon

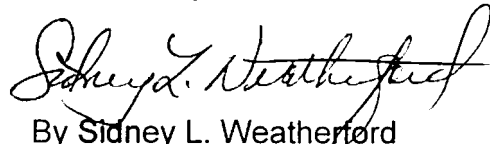
In paragraph 7 on page 9 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to the Applicant's disclosure.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicant believes all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

The Applicant requests a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sidney L. Weatherford", is written over the typed name.

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